

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 5594

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, CU
SUBJECT: BELGRADE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE: VIEWS OF CUBAN
OFFICIALS

1. AT HIS REQUEST, USUN OFFICER MET WITH CUBAN FOREIGN
MINISTRY OFFICIALS ALARCON, BLANCO AND PITA LATE JULY 30 TO
DISCUSS THE OUTCOME OF THE JUST-CONCLUDED BELGRADE CONFERENCE.

2. ALARCON DENIED THAT CUBA HAD PULLED ANY PUNCHES AT
BELGRADE IN ORDER TO PREPARE FOR A SMOOTHER NAM SUMMIT AT
HAVANA IN 1979. THE NAM, HE CLAIMED, NEEDS CUBA A LOT MORE THAN
CUBA NEEDS IT. "OUT SUPPORT FROM THE USSR AND OUR
STRONG LINKS TO OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES," HE CONTINUED,
"GIVE US BACKING FOR CONTESTING ISSUES WITH THE WEST THAT
OTHER STATES IN THE MOVEMENT DO NOT HAVE. IF CUBA SHOULD
LEAVE THE NAM AND START A NEW MOVEMENT," HE SAID, "AT LEAST
30 TO 40 COUNTRIES IMMEDIATELY WOULD FOLLOW US AND MORE WOULD
COME. TIME IS ON OUR SIDE".

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3. THE CUBANS GRUDGINGLY AGREED THAT THE BELGRADE
DECLARATION WAS CLOSER TO THE ORIGINAL YUGOSLAV TEXT THAN
TO CUBAN PREFERENCES. NONETHELESS, THEY REFERRED TO THE
IDEOLOGICAL TUSSLE AT THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE AS ENDING IN
A "TIE", POINTING OUT SEVERAL PHRASES THEY HAD MANAGED TO
INSERT WHICH SUPPORTED THE CUBAN POSITION. BLANCO SAID AT
ONE POINT, THAT "WHAT YOU (THE U.S.) SHOULD WORRY ABOUT IS

THAT THE CUBAN POSITION IS IN THE BELGRADE DOCUMENT. IT MAY BE EVERYWHERE OFFSET BY THE "RIGHT WING" POSITION, BUT IT IS IN THE DOCUMENT. DURING CUBA'S CHAIRMANSHIP WE CAN BE VERY SELECTIVE IN OUR EDITING. WE NEED NOT BE CONSTRAINED BY THE BELGRADE DECLARATION".

4. ALARCON CLAIMED THAT THE HAVANA VENUE FOR THE 1979 NAM SUMMIT WAS NEVER IN DOUBT. IN EXPLAINING THE LAST-MINUTE DYNAMICS, HE SAID THAT THE VENUE ISSUE, ALONG WITH THE INTRACTABLE PARAGRAPH ON NON-INTERFERENCE AND A CONTENTIOUS KAMPUCHEAN AMENDMENT TO EXPEL VIETNAM, HAD ALL BEEN FINESSED BY THE QUICK GAVEL OF POLITICAL COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN JAIPAL IN THE WEE HOURS OF THE MORNING OF JULY 30. JAIPAL'S INTENT, ALARCON SAID, HAD BEEN TO THE NON-INTERFERENCE AND KAMPUCHEAN LANGUAGE SO THAT THE COMMITTEE COULD FINISH ITS WORK. THIS HAD MADE IT NECESSARY, HOWEVER, FOR THE CUBANS TO BRING THE VENUE ISSUE UP SEPARATELY IN ORDER TO MAKE SURE THAT IT WAS ENDORSED AS A CONFERENCE POSITION.

5. BLANCO REPEATED THE THEME THAT CUBA WAS NOW FINDING IT MUCH HARDER TO DEAL WITH U. S. POLICIES ON AFRICA AND NONALIGNMENT UNDER THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION. HE SAID THAT CUBA VIEWED THAT ITS COMPETITION WITH THE U.S. HAD NOW MOVED TO A MUCH MORE COMPLEX ARENA WHERE THE U. S. ENJOYS SIGNIFICANT ADVANTAGES, I. E., ITS TECHNICAL AND DEVELOPMENT SKILLS AND ITS "PROPAGANDA SKILLS". USUN OFFICER COMMENTED
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THAT AT THE LEVEL WHERE POLICIES REACH PEOPLE IT WOULD SEEM THAT THERE WERE CERTAIN OBJECTIVES FOR AFRICA THAT BOTH THE U. S. AND CUBA SHARED, E. G. INDEPENDENCE, END OF RACISM, DEVELOPMENT, DECOLONIZATION. BLANCO REPLIED THAT "AT THAT LEVEL" IT WAS TRUE THERE WERE SHARED OBJECTIVES. HE ADMITTED THAT U. S. INITIATIVES IN AFRICA COULD "COINCIDENTALLY" ALSO SERVE CUBAN GOALS IN AFRICA BY FORCING THE SOUTH AFRICANS OUT OF NAMIBIA AND IAN SMITH OUT OF RHODESIA. NONETHELESS, THESE NEGOTIATED SOLUTIONS WERE IMPERFECT IN THAT THEY DELAYED THE PATH TOWARD SOCIALISM BY POSTPONING THE "SOCIAL REVOLUTION" CUBA VIEWED AS ESSENTIAL TO THE PROCESS.

6. COMMENT: THE THREE CUBANS WERE AGGRESSIVELY CONFIDENT. THEY BELIEVED THAT THEY CAME AWAY FROM BELGRADE WITH THEIR SHARE OF THE LOAF AGAINST HEAVY OPPOSITION. THEY EXPECTED MANY MORE BATTLES TO BE FOUGHT. THEY DID NOT DEVIATE FROM THEIR BELIEF THAT THERE EXISTS A NATURAL ALLIANCE BETWEEN SOCIALIST COUNTRIES AND THE NAM.
EAGLEBURGER

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